



The President's Daily Brief

11 October 1973

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

11 October 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The USSR has apparently mounted a resupply effort to Syria, and may extend it to Egypt.

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Neither the Arabs nor the Israelis made substantial gains in combat yesterday. Fighting was most intense in the Golan Heights. (Page 2)

At SALT the Soviets have tabled a draft permanent agreement on limiting offensive arms. The proposal mirrors most of the provisions of the Interim Agreement, but adds limits on MIRVs and MRVs. (Page 4)

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The communiqué following Tanaka's visit to the USSR shows that there was no progress in resolving important differences. (Page 5)

Moscow has told Sihanouk that it regards his government as the "real" representative of the Cambodian people. The initiative shows that the Soviets now believe Sihanouk will play a major role in any future settlement in Cambodia, and that they would like to be in a position to influence the outcome. (Page 6)

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The Soviets are continuing to peddle grain in South Asia.

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In Turkey, the Justice Party is the front-runner in the legislative elections scheduled for October 14. (Page 8)

Notes on Chile and Panama appear on Page 9.

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USSR - MIDDLE EAST

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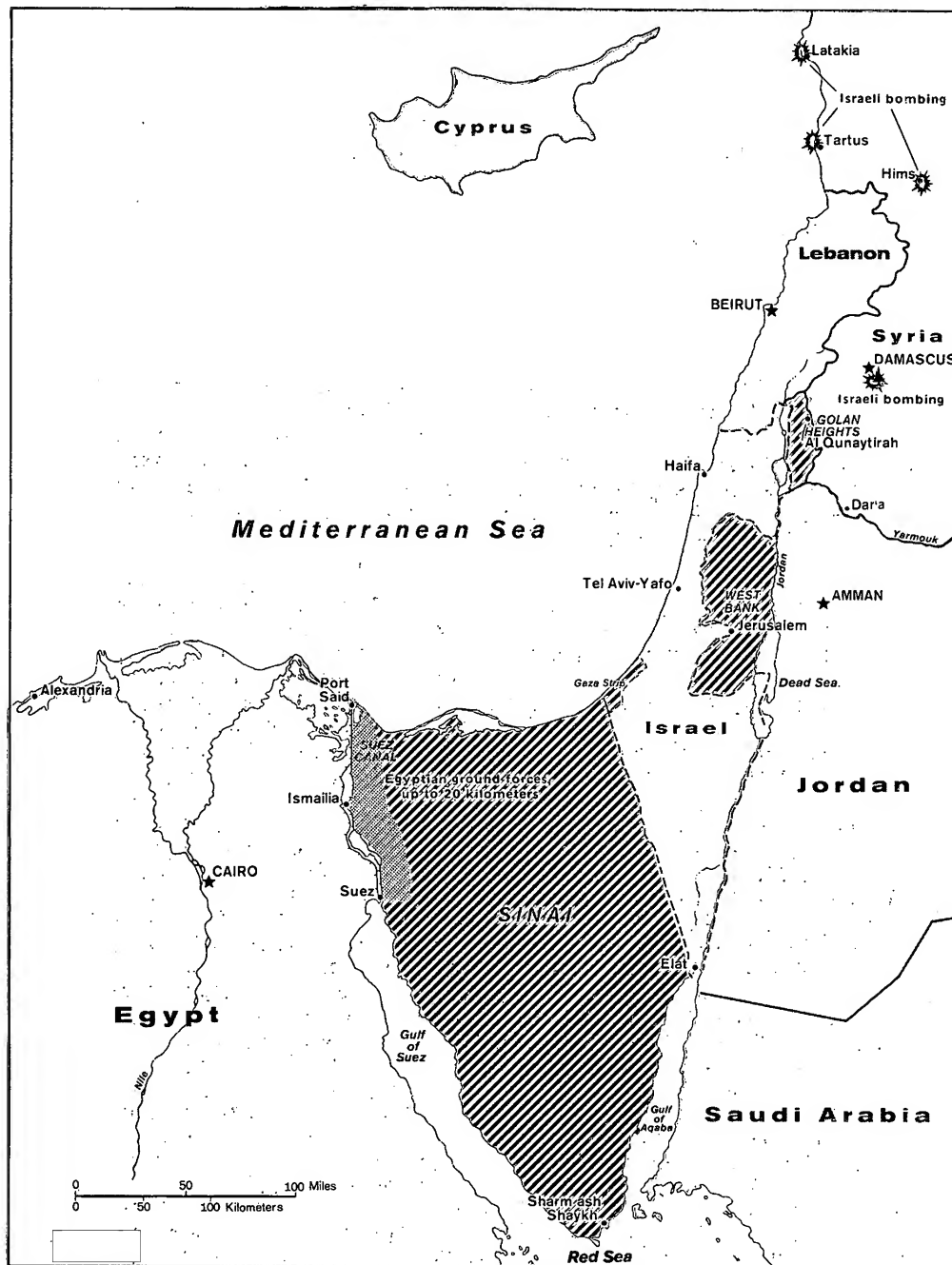
Moscow's decision to cast its lot more fully on the side of the Arabs is probably due in part to the relatively good showing of the Arab forces. In addition, Moscow--sensing growing Arab support for Egypt and Syria--may have decided that a practical demonstration of support is necessary to protect its position in the Middle East.

The Soviets will try, however, to prevent this involvement on the Arab side from damaging relations with the US. They also know that a resupply operation at this time carries the risk of Israeli counteraction. The Israelis are aware of the Soviet flights and could seek to strike at the airfields they are using. Some Soviet flights were diverted to an alternate Syrian field yesterday, possibly because of Israeli air activity.

* * *

Three Soviet surface combatants--a cruiser and two destroyers--entered the Mediterranean from the Black Sea yesterday. They had been scheduled to do so for some time as part of the routine rotation of Mediterranean Squadron ships. They now may be added to the bulk of the Squadron which remains in the vicinity of Crete.

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ARAB STATES - ISRAEL

Neither side made substantial gains yesterday.

There was heavy fighting along the 1967 cease-fire line in the Golan Heights. The Israelis made modest advances on the ground and apparently now control Qunaytirah. Israeli planes flew more than 300 sorties against Syrian targets, including the ports of Latakia and Tartus, the interior city of Hims, and Damascus international airport.

The Egyptians continue to use bridges across the Suez Canal to reinforce their forces in the Sinai. They have moved their lines 20 kilometers east of the canal, but have not yet launched a drive southeast toward the mountain passes. Israeli forces have not mounted a serious counterattack; they may be awaiting reinforcements from the Golan front. Fighting in the air over the Sinai was lighter than in the north. The Egyptian Air Force is generally sitting tight, apparently waiting for Israel to counterattack in strength.

In a televised speech late yesterday aimed at reassuring the Israeli populace, Prime Minister Meir claimed control of the Golan Heights, and said that settlers were returning to their homes there. She added that Israeli forces in the south are now "standing very close to the canal." She predicted eventual victory, but stressed that difficulties lie ahead. Mrs. Meir pointedly warned Jordan to stay out of the fighting.

King Husayn remains under intense Arab pressure to enter the war, however [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The King again stressed to the US ambassador last night that only a cease-fire in place could keep Jordan from becoming directly involved in the fighting.

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Baghdad radio yesterday appealed to all Arab states to halt oil exports to the US, but Egypt and Syria thus far have avoided taking this line. The hostilities are indirectly restricting exports, however. An oil terminal in Syria has been closed, and Aramco's tapline, which carries crude oil from Saudi Arabia through the Golan Heights to the Mediterranean coast, is reportedly running at half capacity, in part because of the prospect of reduced international shipping near the war zone. These developments already have caused a modest cutback in the flow of oil to Western Europe.

Libya reportedly has claimed "full sovereignty" over the Gulf of Sirte, and has warned that it will permit no ship to enter that large body of water along its central coast without special permission. The Libyans are probably reacting to reported movements of the US Sixth Fleet and to recent press speculation concerning alleged US plans to take over Libyan oil fields. Most of Libya's important oil terminals are located at the port of Sirte.

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SALT

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In their first major move since SALT TWO began last November, the Soviets on Tuesday tabled a draft permanent agreement on limiting strategic offensive arms. The draft mirrors most of the provisions of the Interim Agreement, including the asymmetrical limitations on ICBMs and SLBMs, but also adds limits on MIRVs and MRVs, and on other strategic systems.

The most notable aspect of the Soviet proposal is the attempt to deal with multiple warheads. The draft would limit multiple re-entry vehicles on ICBMs and SLBMs to a number not exceeding "the agreed portion" of the total numbers of strategic missiles allowed each side. The wording is ambiguous, but it suggests that under the Soviet plan the total number of launchers on which multiple warheads would be permitted would not be the same for each side.

Alternatively, although less likely, the "agreed portion" formulation may be an attempt to deal with the difficulty of setting exactly equal limits on missiles with multiple warheads, given the differing force postures and capabilities of the two sides. Semenov promised to elaborate on various aspects of the new proposal, and our delegation is seeking clarification.

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USSR-JAPAN

The tepid communiqué following Tanaka's visit to the USSR shows that the two sides made no progress in resolving important differences.

The statement reiterates that a peace treaty between the two countries would improve relations, but does not even pretend that there was any significant movement in that direction. It merely records that the two sides discussed a treaty and will do so again next year, indicating that there was no meeting of the minds on the main issue blocking it--Tokyo's claims to several Soviet-occupied islands north of Hokkaido. Before leaving the USSR yesterday, Tanaka stated at a press conference that the lack of progress on a treaty "cannot help" Japanese-Soviet relations.

The communiqué speaks of the need to increase economic cooperation, including development of natural resources in Siberia, but there is no specific mention of any of the large projects under discussion and no sign that the visit brought these closer to fruition. Japan again made clear its lack of enthusiasm for Moscow's vague plan for Asian collective security; the joint statement avoids mentioning it.

On the positive side, the two countries were able to list a series of minor agreements concluded in connection with the visit. In addition, there may be some validity to the communiqué's claim that "frank" dialogue at the summit made a useful contribution, if only because it afforded the opportunity for a direct exchange of views. Brezhnev set the tone earlier this week when he noted at a luncheon for Tanaka that Soviet-Japanese differences cannot be "solved with one stroke." The meager results reflected in the final statement give added weight to Brezhnev's remark.

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USSR-CAMBODIA

Moscow has officially informed Prince Sihanouk that it regards his government as the "real" representative of the Cambodian people and that it has instructed its delegation at the UN to behave accordingly. The Soviet decision was conveyed to the Prince in Peking by Ambassador Tolstikov on October 9 and publicized by the Prince yesterday.

The Soviets have been edging closer to Sihanouk since the Communist offensive this summer and Hanoi's public reiteration of its support for the Prince. Moscow's initiative indicates that the Soviets now believe Sihanouk will play a major role in any future settlement in Cambodia, and that they would like to be able to influence the outcome. The timing of the Soviet move may have been influenced by Secretary Kissinger's planned visit to Peking.

The Soviets apparently made no promises to Sihanouk about closing their embassy in Phnom Penh, and in making his announcement about Soviet recognition, the Prince did not protest. The Soviet Embassy currently is headed by a second secretary and is smaller in size than at any time since March 1970.

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USSR - SOUTH ASIA

The Soviets continue to peddle grain in South Asia. Moscow's recent behavior contrasts with its footdragging earlier this year in response to appeals for grain from India and Bangladesh.



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Meanwhile, Pakistan has asked the Soviets for a "loan" of 300,000 tons of wheat to help replace losses in the recent floods. Moscow may be willing to provide some of this, but will probably want to avoid giving Pakistan more than the 200,000 tons of wheat it gave Bangladesh last July.

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TURKEY

The conservative Justice Party is the front-runner in the legislative elections scheduled for October 14, but the left-of-center Republican Peoples Party is gaining strength. The chief surprise of the campaign has been the enthusiasm that Republican leader Ecevit has generated among rural voters by stressing populist themes. His party, founded by Ataturk and long led by elder statesman Inonu, has generally been considered an urban, elitist, and pro-military organization.

The Justice Party leader, former prime minister Demirel, has conducted a lackluster campaign that has emphasized his past efforts to promote stability and to provide economic benefits for the peasantry. Demirel has drawn small crowds even in traditional Justice strongholds.

Recent polls by two leading Turkish newspapers indicate that the Justice Party will receive less than half of the vote and not gain a majority in the National Assembly. This has led to speculation that the party will be forced to form a coalition with the Republicans and that new elections could be called as early as next spring.

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NOTES

Chile: The state of siege and curfew continue in force a month after the coup. The armed forces have begun to call up reservists and some retirees, presumably to ease the burden on those on duty and perhaps to fill some civilian posts. The junta has asked the Uruguayan military for advice and assistance in countering the guerrilla and terrorist activity that it still expects.

Panama: The celebrations today marking the military's fifth anniversary in power will again focus attention on the canal dispute with the US. General Torrijos would like to get the stalled negotiations back on track, however, and he appears determined to play the issue in low key and to prevent disturbances during the festivities. Although the military has taken extraordinary security measures, isolated incidents could occur.

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